Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 100342

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TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 100342

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO HONG KONG, BANGKOK, CANBERRA, JAKARTA, KUALA LUMPUR, MANILA, SINGAPORE, TAIPEI, VIENTIANE, WELLINGTON FROM PEKING APRIL 13:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 680

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, CH
SUBJECT: VICE PREMIER CHANG CHUN-CHIAO'S APRIL 2 COMMENTS ON PRC POLICY TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. SUMMARY: REQUESTING THAT IT BE CLOSELY HELD WITHIN THE USG, NEW ZEALAND EMBASSY HAS PASSED USLO RECORD OF APRIL 2 MEETING BETWEEN NEWLY ARRIVED NZ AMBASSADOR R.B. ATKINS AND VICE PERMIER CHANG CHUN-CHIAO. DURING MEETING, VICE PREMIER CHANG EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT ASEAN NATIONS AND THE NATIONS OF INDOCHINA WOULD HAVE GOOD RELATIONS, DESPITE INTERFERENCE BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS IN THE REGION. HE ALSO DEFENDED AT SOME LENGTH THE PRC'S SUPPORT OF "REVOLU-TIONARY" INSURGENCIES IN S.E. ASIA AND ITS SIMULTANEOUS SUPPORT FOR "NEIGHBORLY AND FRIENDLY" COEXISTENCE.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 100342

END SUMMARY.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

2. AMBASSADOR ATKINS NOTED THAT HE WAS ALSO ACCREDITED TO VIETNAM AND HOPED TO VISIT HANOI AFTER THE N.Z. PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO PEKING. HE CONTINUED:

3. BEGIN QUOTE. NOW THAT THE FIGHTING IN VIETNAM WAS OVER, HIS GOVERNMENT FELT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE COUNTRIES OF INDO-CHINA SHOULD BE LEFT UNDISTURBED BY OUTSIDE FORCES, AND SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADJUST THEIR OWN RELATIONSHIPS ONE WITH ANOTHER. IT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT THEY SHOULD DEVELOP COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH THEIR NEIGHBOURS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. THE GROWTH OF ASEAN WAS RELEVANT TO THIS. THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT BELIEVED THE DEVELOPMENT OF ASEAN TO BE A GENUINE EXPRESSION OF THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IN THE REGION. IT HOPED THE COUNTRIES OF INDO-CHINA, AND OF SOUTH EAST ASIA, COULD DEVELOP CLOSER AND MORE COOPERATIVE RELATIONS. DID CHINA SHARE NEW ZEALAND'S VIEW THAT ASEAN WAS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA, AND WHAT PROSPECTS DID CHINA SEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE FAVORABLE RELATIONS BETWEEN INDO-CHINA AND THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST ASIA?

4. VICE PERMIER CHANG ANSWERED THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDO-CHINA AND ASEAN WAS ONE FOR THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED TO DECIDE. CHINA HOPED THAT THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST ASIA WOULD HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF INDO-CHINA. THE CONTENTION BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS WAS OF DIRECT CONCERN TO ALL THESE COUNTRIES. CHINA BELIEVED THAT THE AFFAIRS OF A COUNTRY SHOULD BE MANAGED BY THAT COUNTRY, AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE EQUALITY BETWEEN ALL COUNTRIES, BIG AND SMALL. THE TROUBLE WAS THAT THE TWO SUPERPOWERS HAD BOTH REACHED A HAND INTO THE REGION. CHINA OFTEN WARNED ITS FRIENDS ABOUT THE DANGER OF LETTING THE TIGER IN THE BACK DOOR WHILE REPULSING THE WOLF AT THE FRONT GATE. THIS WAS THE ROLE CHINA COULD PLAY. RELATIONS DEPENDED ON THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE VARIOUS SIDES. IT WAS A SUBJECT THAT COULD BE DISCUSSED WHEN THE NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER CAME TO CHINA.

5. MR. ATKINS AGREED. FROM WHAT THE VICE-PERMIER HAD SAID, IT WAS CLEAR THAT NEW ZEALAND'S AND CHINA'S VIEWS OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTH EAST ASIA HAD A GOOD DEAL IN COMMON. THERE
CONFIDENTIAL

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WAS A NEED TO AVOID OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE, AND A NEED FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE AREA TO BE AWARE OF THE DANGER OF INTERFERENCE. NEW ZEALAND CONSIDERED ITSELF FRIENDLY WITH MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, AND HOPED TO WORK TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WHERE THEY WERE NOT AS GOOD AS THEY MIGHT BE. NEW ZEALAND'S AIM WAS TO HELP AND BE FRIENDLY, BUT NOT TO INTERFERE.

6. VICE-PREMIER CHANG SAID THAT CHINA HAD IMPROVED ITS OWN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST ASIA IN RECENT YEARS. IN CHINA'S VIEW, THE SITUATION IN THE REGION WAS EXCELLENT. DID NEW ZEALAND SEE ANY PROBLEMS WORTHY OF NOTE?

7. MR. ATKINS REPLIED THAT THERE WERE STILL SOME PROBLEMS IN THE REGION: FOR EXAMPLE, THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THAILAND AND ITS NEIGHBORS WERE NOT AT THE MOMENT ALTOGETHER SATISFACTORY. THERE ALSO REMAINED THE PROBLEM OF ACTIVE INSURGENCY WITHIN SOME OF THE COUNTRIES IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA.

8. VICE-PREMIER CHANG OBSERVED THAT THESE WERE TWO DIFFERENT QUESTIONS. THE FIRST WAS ONE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES: CHINA HOPED THEY WOULD CO-EXIST ON NEIGHBORLY AND FRIENDLY TERMS. AS FOR EACH COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC SITUATION, THIS WAS THE INTERNAL AFFAIR OF THE COUNTRY CONCERNED, AND MUST BE SOLVED BY IT. 'INSURGENCY', FOR INSTANCE, WAS A VERY COMPLICATED MATTER. SOME INSURGENTS WERE, IN CHINA'S VIEW, REVOLUTIONARIES; OTHERS WERE NOT. CHINA HAD STATED ITS POLICY AND PRINCIPLE TO MANY COUNTRIES IN THE REGION: CHINA WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. BUT THE CHINESE WERE COMMUNISTS, AND IT WAS NOT RIGHT FOR THEM NOT TO SUPPORT COMMUNISM. IF THEY DID NOT SUPPORT COMMUNIST PARTIES, THEY WOULD THEMSELVES BECOME RENEGADES.

9. THE DECISIVE FACTOR IN WHETHER OR NOT PARTICULAR COMMUNIST PARTIES WON VICTORY WAS NOT CHINA'S SUPPORT, BUT THE CORRECTNESS OR OTHERWISE OF THEIR LINE. IF THE PEOPLE DID NOT WANT THEM THEY WOULD NOT WIN, WHETHER OR NOT SUPPORTED BY CHINA; IN THEY REALLY REPRESENTED THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE, THEY WOULD WIN EVEN IF CHINA WITHHELD ITS SUPPORT. IN THE TIME CHIANG KAI-SHEK HELD POWER, MEMBERS OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAD THEMSELVES BEEN CALLED INSURGENTS AND BANDITS. THE TAIWAN CLIQUE STILL USED SUCH TERMS - THEY CALLED THE VICE-
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PREMIER 'BANDIT CHANG'. NEVERTHELESS, THE COMMUNIST PARTY HAD WON NATIONAL VICTORY, BECAUSE THEY HAD REPRESENTED THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE, WHILE CHIANG KAI-SHEK HAD NOT. THEY HAD NOT WON BECAUSE THEY RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. THE QUESTION HAD TWO ASPECTS: CHINA DID NOT INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT IT DID SUPPORT COMMUNIST PARTIES.

10. NEW ZEALAND ALSO HAD A COMMUNIST PARTY. VICE PREMIER CHANG HAD MET THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE NEW ZEALAND COMMUNIST PARTY, MR. WILCOX. WHETHER OR NOT MR. WILCOX WOULD SUCCEED WOULD DEPEND ON HIS OWN WORK, AND NOT ONCHINA'S SUPPORT. CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH MR. WILCOX DID NOT AND SHOULD NOT HAMPER RELATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND NEW ZEALAND. THAT WAS JUST THE WAY THINGS WERE.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

11. MR. ATKINS AGREED THAT CHINA'S CONTACTS WITH MR. WILCOX SHOULD NOT HAMPER NEW ZEALAND/CHINA RELATIONS. HE NOTED THAT EACH COUNTRY SHOULD MAKE ITS OWN CHOICE, BUT THAT THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY WAS OBLIGED TO SUPPORT OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES. HIS COUNTRY WOULD AGREE THAT THE CHOICE WAS A DOMESTIC MATTER FOR THE COUNTRY CONCERNED. IT MIGHT DISAGREE WITH CHINA ON WHAT 'SUPPORT' INVOLVED. THE WORD 'INSURGENTS' HEHAD USED IN A NEUTRAL SENSE, WITHOUT INTENDING TO SUGGEST PARTICULAR AFFILIATIONS. IT WAS A SIMPLE FACT THAT INSURGENCY OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER WAS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WITH WHICH MANY SOUTH EAST ASIAN GOVERNMENTS HAD TO DEAL.

12. VICE PERMIER CHANG READILY AGREED WITH THE LAST POINT. AS HE HAD SAID, IN THE CHINESE VIEW, SOME INSURGENTS WERE REVOLUTIONARIES, SOME WERE NOT, AND SOME DEFIED CLASSIFICATION. END QUOTE THOMAS UNQUOTE EAGLEBURGER

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

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